Road *via* Dubri, which is extremely important for hauling coal to a number of steel projects coming up in Dubri region; and

(b) whether Government would consider allocating at least Rs. 35 crores for the purpose since this paltry amount is not adequate to start the infrastructure for land acquisition, much less the cost of land acquisition itself?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Angul-Sukinda new line project was included in Budget 1998-99, keeping in view the traffic transportation requirement of a number of steel plants projected to be set up in the nearby areas. The work of construction of this new line was to be progressed, matching with the progress of development of these steel plants. However, as it was observed afterwards that the steel plants were not to materialize as early as anticipated, a traffic re-appraisal survey was carried out during 2001-02 for reviewing the need of this new line. As per the findings of the survey report, this new line project was assigned a low priority from operational point of view as well as for allocation of funds. So far, Final Location Survey and soil exploration along the alignment have been completed. However, in view of upcoming plants of M/s POSCO and other industrial houses in the State of Orissa, a bankability study of Angul-Sukinda new line project has recently been taken up.

Introduction of direct train between Bangalore-Thiruvananthapuram

1189. SHRI KB. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the Thiruvananthapuram bound passengers have to rely on the busy Kanyakumari Express which is jampacked with Coimbatore passengers;

(b) whether there is any demand to introduce direct train between Bangalore and Thiruvananthapuram; and

(c) whether Government would take steps to introduce direct train between Bangalore-Thiruvananthapuram to facilitate devotees to visit Guruvayoor and Sabarimala temples?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Two pairs of express trains are adequately catering to the needs of passengers of Bangalore-Trivandrum sector.

(b) Some representations were received for addtional train between Bangalore and Trivandrum.

(c) Special trains are introduced and load of the trains are augmented to the extent feasible and justified to clear the extra rush for Guruvayoor and Sabarimala during mela period.

Replacement of landline telephones with mobile phone

†1190. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is considering on replacing landline telephones by mobile phones in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether infrastructural arrangements are being made for this propose; and

(d) if so, the details of the progress in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Kottayam-Erumeli railway line

1191. SHRI A VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether proposal/project for Kottayam-Erumeli railway line of Kerala has been abondoned;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) if not, the details of present status of the above project; and

(d) the details of proposal of new railway lines in Kerala and the present status of these proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) In view of stiff resistance from the local people and recommendations of the State Government to drop this project, necessary action has been initiated to drop Kottayam-Erumeli new line project.

(d) The details of new line surveys completed in the recent past and of which report have been received are as under:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.